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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith, to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council, the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women, which was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166.

* E/CN.6/2019/1.

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I. Overview

1. The United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women is a global, multilateral grant-making mechanism that supports efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. The trust fund, which was established in 1996 by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/166, is administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on behalf of the United Nations system. With the strong institutional support of UN-Women and its regional, multi-country and country offices, and working closely with the rest of the United Nations system through its inter-agency Programme Advisory Committee,[1] the trust fund plays a vital role in driving forward collective efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.

2. The trust fund raises and distributes funds to support multi-year projects to address, prevent and ultimately end violence against women and girls in three priority areas: improving the access of women and girls to essential, safe and adequate multisectoral services; furthering the implementation of legislation, policies, national action plans and accountability systems; and promoting the prevention of violence against women and girls. It does so through its three strategic directions: supporting results-oriented approaches to prevent and end violence against women and girls; catalysing learning from global evidence collected from grantees; and leveraging its unique mandate and convening power to advocate and foster sustainable financing for national and local work in preventing and ending violence against women and girls.

3. The present report, prepared for the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council, describes the impact and achievements of the trust fund in 2018.

4. Gender-based violence against women and girls cuts across all generations, has no geographical boundaries and has been recognized as a major obstacle to the fulfilment of human rights and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). As many as 70 per cent of women worldwide have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.[2] At least 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone some form of female genital mutilation or cutting in the 30 countries in which the practice is most prevalent; in the majority of the cases, the girls were cut before 5 years of age.[3]

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[1] In 2018, members of the Programme Advisory Committee at the global and regional levels included the: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; International Labour Organization; Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations Population Fund; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; International Organization for Migration; World Food Programme; and World Health Organization. Intergovernmental organizations and other experts at the global and field levels, including representatives from the Centre for Women's Global Leadership, Equality Now and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative, were also actively involved in the grant-making process.

[2] World Health Organization, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and South African Medical Research Council, *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence* (Geneva, World Health Organization, 2013).

[3] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Female genital mutilation/cutting: a global concern* (New York, 2016); and A/71/209, para. 15.

More than 750 million women alive today were married before their eighteenth birthday and some 250 million entered into a union before 15 years of age.[4]

5. In recent years, advocates and activists working to prevent and end violence against women and girls have witnessed greater public awareness of the need for change, thanks in large part to the determination and courage of survivors of violence around the world. Conversations about violence against women and girls have become more frequent and have permeated areas of public discourse in which they had long been silenced. The trust fund grantees presented in this report are among the millions of people engaged in their own national discourses worldwide. While they may draw strength and inspiration from the wider discussion, their assessment of how to best respond to violence against women and girls and to bring about much-needed change is rooted in their knowledge of their specific environment. They are thus ideally placed to identify needs and lead change from a local perspective, which is, in turn, an important component of bringing about a sustainable transformation in the lives of women and girls. These initiatives require the sustainable investment that the trust fund is aimed at facilitating.

6. A particular focus of the trust fund has been the provision of support for small women-led organizations and other organizations working to ensure that, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, no one is left behind. The groups of women and girls that have most often been left behind include: survivors of violence in humanitarian situations; women and girls living with disabilities; lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women; and women living with HIV/AIDS.

7. Securing sustained and increased funding to prevent and end violence against women and girls remains at the core of the trust fund's efforts. The trust fund has continued to draw attention to the need for resources, above all by showing how the funds it raises enable its grantees to fulfil a unique role in furthering specific programmes of work and sharing knowledge and expertise on effective strategies to prevent and end violence against women and girls.

8. As of December 2018, the Governments of Australia, Austria, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America had contributed to the trust fund's twenty-second grant-making cycle. Support was also received from the UN-Women national committees of Germany, Iceland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as from the UN-Women for Peace Association and from Soko, a private sector partner.

9. In 2018, the trust fund managed 125 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 70 countries and territories.[5]

10. The total funding requested in response to the trust fund's twenty-first call for proposals, which closed in December 2017, was more than $528 million. In that call, the trust fund concentrated primarily on women's rights organizations and women-led organizations (those in which women hold at least 51 per cent of leadership

[4] UNICEF, *Ending child marriage: progress and prospects* (New York, 2014).

[5] Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo (under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)), Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the State of Palestine.

positions), with a particular emphasis on small organizations (those with annual operating budgets of less than $200,000). This focus was based on a study revealing that overall, worldwide, a large number of women-led organizations tend to request small grants because of their absorptive capacity.[6] Analysing annual operational budgets of women's organizations, the authors of the study found that more than 90 per cent had annual operating budgets below $200,000, which aligns with the trust fund's definition of a small organization.

11. In total, 31 organizations in 25 countries and territories were awarded grants totalling $11 million in the twenty-first grant-making cycle.

12. A targeted focus on small organizations enabled the trust fund to increase its outreach to women-led organizations. As a result, a greater percentage of requests came from that group: 41 per cent of all applications were submitted by women's organizations that defined themselves as such, compared with 33 per cent in the previous application cycle. Small women-led organizations, as defined above, accounted for 81 per cent of applications, and 83 per cent of applications were submitted by organizations in which women made up more than 51 per cent of the staff.

II. Building sustainability

13. An increasing body of evidence indicates that the specialized expertise of women's rights organizations and women-led organizations is one of the leading factors in ensuring that programmes aimed at ending violence against women are effective in securing positive change. At the same time, one of the consequences of the historically low level of funding allocated to initiatives to end and prevent violence against women has been the relative underdevelopment of the administrative and governance capacities of organizations, in particular smaller organizations, working on these issues. For these reasons, prioritizing financial and operational capacity-building for small organizations has remained a key focus of the trust fund's advocacy efforts.

14. In 2018, in its twenty-first grant-making cycle, the trust fund continued to expand its small-grant-giving modality (grants of less than $125,000) to improve its outreach to women's organizations: of the 31 organizations receiving grants, 28 were led by women, 18 were women's rights organizations and 11 were small organizations. Through its advocacy efforts, it has sought to raise the profile and visibility of these organizations by increasing the number of platforms that showcase their achievements and inform a wider interested public about efficient and cost-effective ways to bring about change. Training and capacity-building remained a key area of trust fund's work both online and in face-to-face workshops. For example, the fund has implemented 10 online training modules, developed in 2017, on how to ensure accountability for grants, in accordance with the Project Cooperation Agreement, including sessions on project design, monitoring and evaluation; financial and operational management; and ethics and safety. The course is open to new trust fund grantees and their implementing partners and is offered as refresher training to all current grantees. By December 2018, the sessions had been delivered live in three languages and recorded to ensure wider participation and share knowledge.

[6] Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark, "Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality", Association for Women's Rights in Development (Toronto, Canada, 2013).

15. Small grant recipients are currently implementing projects in 27 countries and territories across the trust fund's active portfolio. Examples of the range of work that they are carrying out are provided below.

16. In Armenia, the Women's Support Centre implemented a project for the prevention of domestic violence that built up a national response programme to support survivors. People trained through the project provided counselling, shelter and support services to 443 women and girls, 41 of whom had sought refugee status or were internally displaced and 336 of whom were survivors of domestic violence. Guidelines and community action plans were finalized and widely disseminated to key actors in the field, establishing a framework for greater multisectoral cooperation and the development of mechanisms for implementing the law on domestic violence. The Support Centre held several meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the Minister for Social Affairs and provided information and feedback on best practices, in particular with regard to managing a shelter for survivors of domestic violence. As a direct result of the two-year trust fund-supported project, the Centre has also been approached by the police to help them with the development of mechanisms and protocols to address domestic violence.

17. In Cambodia, the Samatapheap Khnom Organization is implementing a project, including the recruitment and training of three social workers, to strengthen the capacity and autonomy of victims of family-based violence in Chey District, which comprises 28 urban communities plagued by high levels of domestic violence. The project has identified 72 women at risk of, or survivors of, family violence and has provided them with psychosocial support, including weekly follow-up home visits. Several women were referred for emergency health care and others benefited from information about safe shelters and their legal rights. In addition, a coordination meeting in June brought together 14 local authorities and 11 non-governmental partners, inter alia, to discuss referral services and future plans to support survivors of domestic violence.

18. In Guyana, the organization Help and Shelter is implementing a project to address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence in three schools and two communities by building consensus, engagement and competencies within a community-based framework. A total of 298 students – 138 girls and 160 boys between the ages of 10 to 17 – have participated in awareness-raising sessions. Topics covered include domestic violence, family violence, child abuse, puberty and adolescence, children's rights and how to get help and support. Thus far, a total of 85 students – 45 girls and 40 boys, 44 of whom were new cases – have received counselling. Four capacity-building training sessions have been attended by 52 teachers. The topics addressed included gender equality, child abuse and protection and response and referral systems.

III. Strategy-led grant-giving

19. In line with its strategic plan, 2015–2020, the trust fund focuses its grant-giving on three key objectives: supporting work on primary prevention of violence against women and girls; increasing and improving the access to multisectoral services for survivors of violence; and strengthening the implementation of national laws, policies and action plans. Examples of the key achievements of grantees in those areas are provided below.

A. Preventing violence against women and girls

20. Preventing violence against women and girls is a key element of most projects funded by the trust fund. Because early intervention at an age when social attitudes are being formed is especially important for effecting change, the trust fund supports many projects that are aimed at making schools and other educational settings safe places for girls. The fund currently supports eight grantees working to improve curricula or to implement policies, practices or services aimed at preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in 130 target schools.

21. In Kenya, the organization Trócaire has implemented a project focused on adolescent girls and young women in eight informal settlements in Nakuru town to reduce violence against women and girls through empowerment activities, including training in fundamental rights, economic and vocational skills and fostering community-level gender-transformative behavioural change through community engagement and awareness-raising using the "SASA! Faith" methodology. Thanks to this training, 150 adolescent girls and young women, who now have increased levels of economic and personal power, including new self-confidence and increased self-esteem, have embarked on18 income-generating business start-ups. In addition, a total of 83 girls are enrolled in vocational skills training for the job market or self-employment. The SASA! Faith model has engaged faith communities in dialogue on the underlying causes of violence against women and in large-scale awareness-raising activities through public forums, reaching over 3,500 people. In addition, more than 250 front-line workers from various sectors took part in capacity-building activities to provide effective and high-quality services and implement laws to prevent violence against women and girls. In this regard, 41 cases were ongoing and three convictions for sexual violence had been secured by the end of 2018.

22. The Mother and Child Education Foundation in Turkey has built on a previous project supported by the trust fund, Father Training for Violence-Free Families, to translate improved attitudes into gender-sensitive and non-violent behaviours within families. The first six-month assessment of the project revealed that women had received an increased level of support, both perceived and reported, for their rights and a decreased level of domestic violence. During the 47 sessions organized by the Foundation between January and June 2018, 388 mothers shared their experiences of a changing home atmosphere, which they linked to changes in their spouses' attitudes. During in-depth interviews, women reported fewer aggressive tendencies in their spouses and more open verbal expression of awareness of, and willingness to change, aggressive behaviours.

23. Early and child marriage was the focus of a project implemented in Pakistan by the Sindh Community Foundation. The overall goal was to ensure that girls in 30 villages in three districts of Sindh province were better protected from being forced into early marriage. In the final evaluation, it was found that the project had increased knowledge and shifted attitudes towards the protection of girls from early marriage. The project reached 3,915 primary and secondary beneficiaries, including 10 girls who, having been protected from early marriage, had gone back to school – three of them as a result of timely action taken by police officials trained through the project.

B. Improving access to multisectoral services

24. A second priority area of the trust fund is increasing the access of women and girls to essential, safe and adequate multisectoral services. Many applications for funding received by the trust fund include some form of service delivery for survivors,

above all promoting and/or providing services such as psychological counselling, medical care and shelters, as well as access to justice through the provision of legal aid. The training of service providers is also an important component of projects aimed at enhancing the access of women and girls to essential, safe and adequate services. In 2018, the trust fund supported the work of 19 grantees that helped almost 4,600 women and girls to gain access to specialized support services.

25. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Women's Forum-Tetovo is using a small grant from the trust fund to implement a three-year project to provide survivors of domestic violence with access to coordinated, multisectoral support services. Survivors of domestic violence have been recruited to participate in the first cycle of workshops, and the Women's Forum has worked to increase public information and initiate dialogue about domestic violence in the Tetovo region. Various media materials have been designed, published and distributed, which has contributed to greater awareness of domestic violence and the services available to survivors. This has been successful in helping women to speak out against violence and to obtain access to services and support, as reflected in a significant increase in the number of cases of domestic violence reported.

26. In Liberia, a final evaluation of a project implemented by the organization Episcopal Relief and Development to address violence within the family and the community in six districts in Grand Cape Mount and River Cess counties revealed that there had been a significant reduction in reported violence by intimate partners (down to 5 per cent from 14.8 per cent) and non-partners (down to 2.6 per cent from 16.1 per cent). A very high number of faith leaders (97 per cent) who participated in the project and spoke out against gender-based violence at various events. As a result of the success and learning potential generated by the project, the organization was invited to submit a new proposal for expanding it under the trust fund's "by invitation only" window and has successfully advanced to the selection process. The new project includes: expanding the faith-leader toolkit for preventing and responding to gender-based violence; further developing the facilitation guide to help empower Christian and Muslim faith leaders to speak out against violence against women in their communities and support survivors more effectively; and expanding and integrating youth engagement work. The project is aimed at 14 districts in four counties, and sustainability will be ensured through continued engagement with members of the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, as well as through the grantee's work to support survivors through services, in particular the provision of a safe house in every county.

C. Fostering the implementation of laws and policies

27. Many trust fund grantees are working to bring legislation into line with international human rights standards; implement laws, regulations and protocols to end harmful traditional practices; and encourage States to fulfil their obligation to exercise due diligence in order to prevent violence, protect victims and ensure their right to justice. In 2018, trust fund grantees were instrumental in advocating for new national laws and policies to protect survivors and bring perpetrators to justice. For example, in Ecuador, a project implemented by ACDemocracia was aimed at ensuring that women and girl who were survivors of violence in the Ambato, Pelileo and Baños territories had greater access to a more effective justice system. The project was also aimed at promoting the application of normative frameworks and policies for the protection of women's rights by influencing legislative reform and changing cultural norms. It was able to provide at least 20,000 people with information on the right of women to live free from violence through the use of various publicity initiatives, including broadcasts in the national and international media. ACDemocracia, along

with the National Coalition of Women and UN-Women, also played an important role in advocating for the adoption of the new Comprehensive Law for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women, which was approved by the Ecuadorian Parliament in January 2018.

28. With trust fund support, the Association Tanakhil is implementing a project in the Marrakech Safi region, considered one of the poorest regions of Morocco. The project is aimed at bringing about positive change in the lives of women and girls between 10 and 19 years of age by engaging with members of civil society and faith-based organizations, as well as with men and boys. Specifically, the project is aimed at improving the Government's policy on gender-based violence in schools and increasing the understanding of gender-based violence among young boys and girls.

29. In Peru, the organization Red nacional de promoción de la mujer is implementing a project in the regions of Ayacucho and Huánuco aimed at reducing gender-based violence against older women who were victims of conflict-related violence in the 1980s and 1990s. The project has empowered more than 487 women, of whom 44 per cent were over 60 years of age, by increasing their awareness of their rights. Through peer-to-peer exchange workshops, the grantee reached more than 210 older women from various organizations and 286 men and other women, including students and youth groups. The grantee adopted a holistic approach to developing participatory needs assessments, awareness-raising and training workshops and communications campaigns, all focusing on rights, interculturality, gender and aging. The project was also aimed at raising awareness among local officials and advocating for gender- and age-sensitive public policies. As a direct result of the project's implementation, older women are now part of community surveillance committees and the municipalities' round table on poverty reduction. In addition, four emblematic cases of violations of women's rights were reviewed and, to date, one case has been decided in favour of the survivor; the remaining three are pending decisions. The grantee has also been able to mobilize additional resources to continue to implement some of the core areas of this project beyond the life of the trust fund grant.

IV. Leaving no one behind

30. Grants have continued to be awarded to projects that embody the principle of leaving no one behind, reflecting the universal inclusiveness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For example, five new projects support the needs of women and girls who are survivors of violence and have been forcibly displaced – as refugees or as internally displaced people – in the context of humanitarian crises, and nine support projects aimed at preventing and ending violence against women and girls with disabilities. The trust fund is investing more than $23 million to end violence against underserved and marginalized women and girls to ensure that no one is left behind. Examples of the work of grantees in this area are provided below.

A. Responding to humanitarian crises

31. Since 2017, the trust fund has supported projects under a special funding window aimed at preventing and ending violence against women and girls in the context of the forced displacement and refugee crises. Priority has been given to grass-roots women's organizations working towards mid- to long-term interventions. By focusing on longer-term needs and finding durable solutions, the trust fund has sought to contribute to bridging the humanitarian and development divide and to encourage localization.

32. In the second year of the special funding window, the trust fund awarded $2.5 million to the five new projects relating to this area. Projects in this special window, which began implementation in 2018, include the women-led organization Fundación Centro de Derechos Sociales de la Persona Migrante, which is using a small grant from the trust fund to address violence against women and girls who have entered Costa Rica from neighbouring Nicaragua. The project is aimed at providing women and girls from Nicaragua with information about their rights and referring them to specialized services and networks for financial and psychological support. In Kenya, a project implemented by the Refugee Consortium of Kenya, a woman-led organization, is working with Somali refugees in the Nairobi and Garissa areas, many of whom have been there for almost two decades, to improve the access of the survivors to justice. In the State of Palestine, the Women's Affairs Technical Committee will implement a project in six communities in area C of the West Bank, focusing primarily on women and girls who are displaced or at risk of being displaced. The project is aimed at addressing the gaps that hinder the access of at-risk women to justice.

33. In September, the trust fund held a five-day knowledge-exchange workshop in Amman, involving eight current and new grantees working on ending violence against women and girls in humanitarian contexts. The event provided an opportunity for grantees to obtain access to training to respond to programmatic and operational gaps in capacity, exchange learning and knowledge and document knowledge in a format that can be used for both internal and external purposes. Following a training needs assessment, the trust fund identified the Sphere Training Package as a course suited to the needs of this cohort. Sphere is aimed at improving the quality of humanitarian assistance and the accountability of humanitarian actors to their constituents, donors and affected populations through *The Sphere Handbook, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*, one of the most widely known and internationally recognized sets of common principles and universal minimum standards in life-saving areas of humanitarian response. Overall, the training had an impact on improving knowledge. With regard to the knowledge exchange and documentation aspects of the workshop, participants reported that new knowledge was gained that could be applied in their own work and key lessons and solutions were highlighted for follow-up to document practices in a manner that can be shared, applied and tested further.

B. Addressing the needs of women and girls living with disabilities

34. Worldwide, women and girls with disabilities face a risk of rape that is almost three times greater than that faced by women and girls in general, are twice as likely to experience other forms of gender-based violence and are more likely to suffer more severe injuries and more prolonged abuse.[7] In the 2018 call for proposals, 173 applications were received from 69 countries and territories, requesting a total of $64 million during the first special thematic funding window on violence against women and girls with disabilities. Supporting projects to address the needs of this long-underserved group of women and girls is a priority for the trust fund, which awarded nine new grants worth a total of $2.9 million for projects under this window. The new grants were announced on 24 July 2018, at the Global Disability Summit in

[7] Stephanie Ortoleva and Hope Lewis, "Forgotten Sisters – A Report on Violence against Women with Disabilities: An Overview of Its Nature, Scope, Causes and Consequences", Northeastern Public Law and Theory Faculty Research Papers Series, No. 104 (Northeastern University, Boston, 2012).

London, which was co-hosted by the United Kingdom Department for International Development, the International Disability Alliance and the Government of Kenya.

35. Among the new projects awarded grants in 2018 for this area of work is one implemented in Kenya by Women Challenged to Challenge. This focuses on three ethnically diverse locations to reduce violence against women and girls with disabilities and to increase the conviction rate for abusers. The grantee is working with service providers and front-line responders to improve attitudes, protection mechanisms and multisectoral services. It is also working closely with two partners: Advantage Africa, a United Kingdom-based non-governmental organization with extensive experience in community development in East Africa, and the Kibwezi Disabled Persons' Organisation. The project engages women in empowerment activities, supports the capacity of service providers and develops and delivers community theatre programmes through the community drama group, Twaweza, which has experience in creating and performing plays about violence against women in community settings.

36. A project implemented by the Stars of Hope Society, the only association in the State of Palestine that is run by and for women with disabilities, is aimed at improving the access of women and girls with disabilities in the West Bank and Gaza to multisectoral services.

37. Action on Disability and Development is implementing a project in six provinces to build on and expand the work of the Cambodian Women's Crisis Centre, a current trust fund grantee, with girls and women with disabilities who have either survived or are at risk of violence in the family, highlighting the important role played by the trust fund in enabling grantees to learn from one another's good practice. Working in partnership with local women's and disabled person's organizations, the grantee aims to increase the capacity of disabled women's networks to lead primary prevention efforts. These include adapting the "SASA! Faith" community mobilization methodology, using positive role models to contribute to changing social norms and carrying out research to better understand intersectional approaches to primary prevention.

38. Several of the grants awarded in the new cycle are funded under the trust fund's by invitation only window. Based on the quality of the results in the first round of funding, this type of grant is eligible to bypass the usual three-year moratorium and apply for a second grant. First-round project results must show potential for being enhanced or replicated, or demonstrate a significant impact that can be built on with the second grant. There are now nine grantees in this cohort; the two highlighted below focus on the needs of women and girls with disabilities.

39. In a final evaluation of a project implemented in Zimbabwe by Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe, it was found that the organization had made significant changes to the lives of girls and women with disabilities. A total of 738 girls and women with disabilities who are survivors of gender-based violence received practical assistance and expert support services. The second project builds on these achievements and focuses on six rural and underserved districts with high rates of poverty, HIV/AIDS and sexual violence against girls and women with disabilities. The project replicates existing strategies and introduces a new aspect, which involves working with the Ministry of Health and Child Care to standardize and decentralize psychiatric assessment, when needed. This change is a direct result of lessons learned in the first project, through which it was found that the legal requirement to travel to Harare for psychiatric assessment was a significant barrier to justice. The grantee has established strong partnerships with 35 disabled people's organizations and other community groups across the country and is working with the Government's victim-friendly system and in collaboration with the joint initiative of

the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Programme, entitled "Advancing the Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Zimbabwe".

40. In a final evaluation by the Mental Disability Rights Initiative of Serbia, it was found that a project it had initiated had been successful in promoting institutional and policy changes for women with mental disabilities and that a total of 110 women had increased their awareness of protection mechanisms as a result of their involvement in project-related activities. Participants in the project had also contributed to the national strategy on improving the position of persons with disabilities by 2020 and the related action plan, which contain important references in line with relevant international human rights treaties. The new project, for which a grant was awarded in 2018, seeks to enhance and build on the work, focusing on the needs of women and girls in custodial institutions, such as residential and psychiatric institutions, community living or supported living arrangements. Through the dissemination of knowledge and confidence-building activities, the project is aimed at ensuring that women and girls with mental disabilities in Serbia receive greater support and feel empowered to live their lives free of custodial violence. Intensive training courses, models and standards will also be offered to service providers in order to improve services for women with disabilities, including survivors of custodial violence.

C. Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women

41. Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women are another key group at risk whose needs have historically been underserved and need to be addressed if the goal of leaving no one behind is to be achieved. The trust fund invests in a number of projects to improve the delivery of services and change harmful, discriminatory attitudes and mindsets in order to prevent and end violence against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women. In China, for example, the organization Equality, in collaboration with its partners, used a small grant from the trust fund to implement a project to empower female survivors of violence, focusing in particular on lesbian, bisexual and transgender women; women and girls living with HIV/AIDS; and young women in seven provinces and municipalities. In a final evaluation of the project, it was revealed that dozens of women in these target groups had gained knowledge about domestic violence and relevant legislation, as well as the skills needed to build a support network of survivors. It also found the project had successfully leveraged a network of civil society organizations to prevent domestic violence among the target groups.

42. In Malaysia, Persatuan Kesedaran Komuniti Selangor, or Empower Malaysia, was awarded a grant in 2018 to provide both cisgender and transgender women with the language, tools, know-how and support to counter sexual and gender-based violence. The project, implemented in six states, is aimed at defending and promoting women to freedom of expression and to engage in decision-making in public and political spaces. It employs a mixture of research, documentation, monitoring, advocacy, capacity development, awareness-raising, networking, support and institutional strengthening to highlight and address the way sexual and gender-based violence are used to prevent women from participating in the public and political spheres.

D. Indigenous women and girls

43. Indigenous women and girls are among the world's most underserved populations and are, therefore, a priority for trust fund investment. Worldwide, these women often experience high levels of violence, including femicide and

disappearance (E/CN.6/2015/3). Intersecting discrimination results in a life of extreme poverty, including limited access to legal and social services, for many indigenous women and girls. In 2018, three new projects focusing on the needs of indigenous women and girls were awarded grants totalling $925,922 by the trust fund. For example, Coordinadora por los derechos de la infancia y la adolescencia, a network of 30 civil society organizations in Paraguay, is using a small grant from the trust fund to defend, promote and monitor the human rights of children. Its particular focus is women and girls with disabilities from rural and indigenous communities, who face discrimination and social and economic exclusion. They have little or no access to education and health services and, consequently, are at a heightened risk of violence in the home, the community, schools and public spaces, as well as of human trafficking.

E. Women living in rural areas

44. Notwithstanding the important role that women in rural areas play in their communities in areas such as food production, and in subsistence farming in particular, they often have limited access to resources and have greater difficulty than men in gaining access to public services, social protection and decent employment opportunities (see E/CN.6/2018/3, and E/2018/27, paras. 1–40). Women living in rural areas also have restricted access to protection and comprehensive services to address gender-based violence. This group of historically underserved women is the focus of several projects supported by the trust fund.

45. For example, a project implemented by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction in Kenya focused on ending early marriage and female genital mutilation in rural communities. It sought to improve the implementation of laws and policies designed to address these and other harmful practices and end violence against women and girls. The approach adopted, entitled "Learning our way out", involved training local community-based facilitators to lead conversations with small groups, helping friends and neighbours to recognize the link between gender-based discrimination and women's rights and socioeconomic conditions. In addition, the project worked to build a community-based referral system and to link survivors to legal support, medical services, psychosocial therapy, shelter and protection. In its third year of operation, the project reached 400 women and 200 men with key messages on International Women's Day, in March, and in May it reached 216 religious leaders with key messages to help believers disassociate religion from harmful cultural practices. The project also offered refresher courses and capacity-building on a number of issues, including sexual and gender-based violence, law enforcement, communication and facilitation skills, HIV/AIDS and child protection, involving 199 community conversation facilitators and 61 teachers. A total of 35 "Agents of Change" clubs targeting school children were introduced in schools in Wamba, Kargi, Korr and Merti, and at least 990 girls were reached through mentorship and counselling through the clubs.

46. A project implemented in India by the non-governmental organization Pragya works to end violence against women and girls through attitudinal change in 10 districts across five states. Training, including in and gender-sensitization, was provided for members of women's groups, *Panchayats* (village councils), law enforcement and civil society, with the aim of addressing deep-rooted gender norms in tribal societies and empowering tribal women. As part of the project, 10 sociolegal kiosks serve as resource and empowerment centres, referring clients to a network of governmental and non-government agencies that work on violence against women, health and nutrition, education and vocational training, livelihood and agriculture; as well as serving as an observatory to address emerging issues in the community. Ninety

local mentors are using the knowledge gained through training and campaigns to bring about attitudinal change and engagement among community members, including men and boys. Some 2,812 women have benefited directly from the project, and women from the target communities have indicated increased levels of confidence and self-esteem and shown a high level of commitment to disseminating the information they have received to other villages. Respondents from 103 ethnic minority tribal communities and participants at a national workshop displayed a deeper understanding of violence against women and girls and the possibilities for effective action to reduce it as a result of their participation in the Pragya project.

V. Results and evidence

47. In 2018, the trust fund published a technical annex to its Annual Report of 2017, providing an update on the results framework of its strategic plan, 2015–2020. As the first such report to be produced by the trust fund in its 20-year history, it involved the development of indicators, methods and systems to collect data, including input from, and in consultation with, more than 70 grantee organizations. As a result, the framework has been simplified to include three tiers of result types in order to better reflect which results can be attributed to the secretariat of the trust fund and which are achieved by the organizations themselves through the trust fund grant. The number of indicators was reduced from 63 to 48, in response to a thorough review and in consultation with grantee organizations, to ensure that the results selected were the most relevant and focused.[8]

48. A mid-term review of the current trust fund's strategic plan was initiated in 2018, and the report is scheduled to be issued in early 2019. The review seeks to assess progress against the trust fund's strategic plan, 2015–2020, and to gather evidence about specific achievements that demonstrate how these results contribute towards the trust fund's strategic direction for this period. The evaluators used both qualitative and quantitative methods to review the current strategic plan, including a documentation review, key informant interviews and an online questionnaire for grantees. The aim is to use the evidence and recommendations to inform any adjustments needed to the current strategic plan, as well as the conceptualization of the new strategic plan, 2015–2020.

49. The review included an anonymous survey of organizations funded by the trust fund since 2015 to assess satisfaction with its support, including the training provided. A total of 101 individuals from a portfolio of more than 100 organizations targeted responded to the survey. Early results show that 71 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had used what they learned in other projects (13 per cent said that it was too early to say, because projects had just started) and 84 per cent believed that the visibility of their organizations had increased as a result of the partnership with the trust fund.

50. The evidence hub, one of the pillars of the current strategic plan, took a step forward in 2018 with the creation of a new grants evaluations library on the trust fund's public website. The information shared is part of a larger endeavour to build an evidence and learning hub by 2020 that can catalyse and harness the knowledge and lessons learned through the work of grantees. Thus far, 40 evaluations have been posted to the trust fund website. In the future, all satisfactory, high-quality project evaluations will be uploaded onto the website, and it is planned to disseminate the

[8] United Nations, UN-Women, "United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women Annual Report 2017: Generating Sustainability" (2018).

findings among practitioners and partners. Examples of final evaluations received in 2018 are provided below.

51. The grantee Restless Development, Nepal, implemented a project in two regions of the country to: (a) reduce the incidence of the harmful traditional practice of *chhaupadi*, which includes forcing women and girls to sleep in a hut during menstruation; and (b) improve nutrition and health, social support and access to education during menstruation for women and girls. In the final evaluation, it was found that the project had significantly decreased the incidence of the practice. The project reached 45,990 women and girls, far exceeding its target of 28,000, and, through the project, the proportion of women and girls who slept (or who were forced to sleep) outside in a hut fell from 19.4 per cent to 5.5 per cent. By the end of the project, far fewer women and girls reported that they were given reduced portions of dairy products during menstruation, and all the male community leaders believed that the harmful traditional practice should be eliminated (as compared with 71 per cent at the start of the project).

52. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the grantee Equality for Growth worked with traders to reduce sexual, verbal, physical and political violence against female traders in two districts (Ilala and Temeke) as well as to improve protection and support when violence does occur so that women can more fully exercise their economic rights. In the final evaluation, it was found that the project had contributed to a better trading environment for female market traders. In addition, 86 per cent of women who took part in a survey stated that, after the project, violence against women in the marketplace had decreased. By the time of the project's completion, between four and seven cases of violence against women were being reported each month in the markets surveyed, down from some 20 cases per month in 2015, and as a result of the authorities' improved capacities, more than 90 per cent of the female traders interviewed were able to obtain access to services to address violence against women.

53. Between January and November 2018, the trust fund team conducted 29 monitoring missions to projects in 21 countries, eight of which were to provide training and support to small organizations. One such visit was to a project implemented in Egypt by Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development, which was aimed at supporting marginalized women who experience violence and/or are at risk of HIV infection. In a final evaluation of the project, it was found that women's understanding of personal and structural violence had improved, as had the level of their interaction with support services. By the end of the project, health-care, legal, psychological and anti-violence programmes had reached 1,662 at-risk women in Cairo and helped to bring about significant behavioural change. Based on the success and learning potential of this project, the grantee was invited to submit a second proposal for a project, which will enhance the provision of essential services for women who have been the most marginalized in four informal, urban communities in greater Cairo.

54. The trust fund team also visited the project entitled "Improving access to life with no violence" for women survivors in central and northern Montenegro, which is using a small trust fund grant to improves the access of women and children who are survivors of violence to specialized support services in four economically disadvantaged and geographically isolated communities. Through the project, new bilingual support services in Montenegrin and Albanian have been introduced on the national SOS helpline, responding to the needs of Roma women. Now regularly available eight hours per week, the service has provided information to some 200 women.

VI. Global advocacy for ending violence against women

55. In the context of the growing momentum to address and end violence against women, the trust fund continued to use its unique convening power to support meaningful opportunities to advocate for change, call for financing commitments and amplify the voices of diverse women's movements. It hosted a number of key events and initiatives to increase the visibility of the work of the trust fund and its grantees.

56. For example, Princess Eugenie of York (United Kingdom) visited with two non-governmental organizations, the grantees ASTRA and ATINA, both of which have implemented projects in Serbia aimed at providing support to survivors of human trafficking. ATINA's project works to prevent the trafficking of women and girl refugees and asylum-seekers and to offer support services to victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The visit provided an opportunity for the Princess Eugenie to meet face-to-face with the representatives of the two organizations that are working to change the lives of survivors of human trafficking and to create safe spaces for their recovery and opportunities for their reintegration into society. Princess Eugenie's advocacy on the prevention of human trafficking helped bring much needed visibility to the issue as well as to the trust fund itself. ASTRA activists provide specialized support to survivors of trafficking and have established effective referral procedures through a trust fund-supported project. The ASTRA SOS hotline, which provides essential information, has received more than 8,000 calls, most of which were directly related to human trafficking. In addition, ASTRA has provided direct legal and reintegration assistance in 503 cases relating to trafficking.

57. In August, the Free Yezidi Foundation, a trust fund grantee, participated in a high-profile panel discussion – also attended by the President of the Global Justice Centre, Akila Radhakrishnan; the Executive Director of UN-Women, Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka; and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten – to mark the attack by ISIS on the Yazidi community in Sinjar, Iraq, and to commemorate the victims. The discussion, held at United Nations Headquarters, was focused on access to justice of Yazidi women and girls who were victims of violence, as well as the need for recovery from trauma, and rehabilitation.

58. In October, the founder of the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denis Mukwege, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace for his work with women and girls who are survivors of sexual violence. The hospital helped to pioneer the Panzi Foundation model of integrated rights-based psychosocial, legal and socioeconomic support provision in one-stop centres. The Panzi Foundation, which was awarded a trust fund grant to enhance its services for sexual violence survivors, worked in partnership with Physicians for Human Rights, another trust fund grantee, to train medical, legal and psychosocial professionals on the principles underlying its model and on the collection of forensic evidence to bring the perpetrators of sexual violence to justice and obtain justice for survivors. Beginning in 2011, the trust fund has invested in the Programme on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones launched by the Physicians for Human Rights and is currently funding its second generation of results. Since that time, Physicians for Human Rights has trained 1,578 health-care, legal and law enforcement professionals, who have provided services to 42,162 survivors of sexual violence throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya.

VII. The way ahead

59. In 2018, survivors of violence continued to raise their voices, sometimes in the face of concerted efforts to ignore, silence or discredit their experiences. They helped to generate and sustain a climate in which gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls, which underpins it, have garnered enhanced exposure to public scrutiny. The trust fund has a crucial role to play in harnessing this increased awareness and in channelling it into initiatives that will bring about systemic and lasting change. The projects that are currently being supported have shown that the trust fund is establishing deeper roots in precisely those women-led small organizations that can empower women to deliver real change in their lives in the most effective ways for their specific contexts. Moreover, the trust fund's global reach allows it to provide a space for the cross-fertilization of information among grantees on effective strategies to overcome violence against women. The capacity-building that the trust fund is spearheading among grantees is also furthering the aim of encouraging wider and sustainable investment in this crucial area. The trust fund will continue to draw on this unique body of experience to amplify the voices of survivors and support the work of grantees in order to prevent and end violence against women and girls.

United Nations E/CN.6/2019/8

Economic and Social Council

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Commission on the Status of Women
Sixty-third session
11–22 March 2019
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Letter dated 14 December 2018 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women

I have the honour of bringing to your attention the resolutions and decisions adopted at the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council, held from 27 July 2017 to 26 July 2018, that are of relevance to the functional commissions (see annex).

A total of 30 resolutions and 72 decisions were adopted at that session, as were the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Council (E/HLS/2018/1) and the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up entitled "Follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (see E/FFDF/2018/3). I would greatly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of your functional commission for consideration and action, if necessary. I thank you for your continued assistance and collaboration in this regard.

(*Signed*) Inga Rhonda **King**

* E/CN.6/2019/1.

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Annex

Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session calling for action by relevant United Nations bodies

Resolutions requesting follow-up by the Commission on the Status of Women

2018/8	Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women
2018/10	Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

Resolutions calling for action by the functional commissions

2018/6	Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002
2018/29	Science, technology and innovation for development
2018/30	Calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

Resolutions calling for action by all relevant United Nations bodies/entities of the United Nations system

2018/3	Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development
2018/7	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system
2018/9	Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women
2018/11	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations
2018/15	Enhancing the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Input to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development

Note by the Secretariat

1. The present note provides a summary of the contribution that the work of the Commission on the Status of Women can make to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019.

2. In its resolution 72/305 on the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly introduced changes with implications for the subsidiary bodies of the Council. Among other provisions in the resolution, the Assembly described the substantive leadership that the Council would provide, and determined that subsidiary bodies of the Council shall adopt their own respective themes, aligned with the main theme, while continuing to address issues or a theme necessary to discharge their other functions.

3. The General Assembly determined that, at its integration segment, the Economic and Social Council would discuss and consolidate all the inputs of Member States, the subsidiary bodies of the Council, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The segment would also coordinate the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council, promoting a clearer division of labour among them.

4. The Economic and Social Council should also strengthen the oversight and coordination role of its subsidiary bodies and integrate the outcomes of their work into its own. Subsidiary bodies should support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the work of the Council, and their work should reflect an integrated and action-oriented approach to the Sustainable Development Goals, with recommendations that build on a review of progress on the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits in their respective areas. Each subsidiary body must also consider whether there is a continued need for annual

* E/CN.6/2019/1.

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negotiated outcomes and ensure that, when they produce such outcomes, they are effective and action-oriented and result in increased levels of cooperation.

5. In accordance with its current methods of work (see Council resolution 2015/6), the Commission contributes to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda, so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and reports on the aspects relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women of the agreed main theme of the Economic and Social Council, in order to contribute to the work of the Council. The Commission applies a thematic approach to its work and adopts a multi-year programme of work. In selecting its priority theme, the Commission takes into consideration, in addition to the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the programme of work of the Council, as well as the 2030 Agenda, so as to build synergies and contribute to the work of the Council system and the high-level political forum. At its sixty-fourth session, the Commission will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and will decide on its future multi-year programme of work (see Council resolution 2018/8).

6. The theme of the 2019 session of the Economic and Social Council, as indicated in its decision 2017/208, is "One world for all: empowering people to build equal and inclusive societies". In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/299, the high-level political forum will, in 2019, consider the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" and will conduct an in-depth review of Goals 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16, as well as Goal 17.

7. The multi-year programme of work of the Commission, as contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/3, enables the Commission to build synergies and linkages with the work of the Council and the high-level political forum in order to contribute to the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission will consider the following topics in 2019:

Priority theme: social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Review theme: women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session)

Focus area: to be determined

8. The thematic focus of the Council and the high-level political forum in 2019 can benefit significantly from the recent work of the Commission.

9. In its agreed conclusions on women's empowerment and the links to sustainable development adopted at its sixtieth session, in 2016, the Commission set out a comprehensive road map for the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Those recommendations for action are relevant to the themes of the Council and the high-level political forum in 2019. The Commission's evaluation, at its sixty-third session, of progress made in the implementation of the agreed conclusions of its sixtieth session can constitute further input.

10. At its sixty-first session, in 2017, the Commission, in its agreed conclusions on women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, set out steps and measures necessary to overcome persistent inequalities, discrimination and barriers that women face in the current world of work and actions needed to ensure that women can take full advantage of the opportunities that are arising as the world of work is changing.

11. At its sixty-second session, in 2018, the Commission, in its agreed conclusions on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment

of rural women and girls, set out a comprehensive approach to overcome persistent inequalities, discrimination and barriers faced by women and girls living in rural areas and outlined concrete measures to lift all rural women and girls out of poverty and to ensure the realization of their rights, well-being and resilience.

12. The priority theme of its sixty-third session enables the Commission to best support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the work of the Council. It is in line with the themes of the 2019 session of the Council and the high-level political forum and can contribute directly to their deliberations. An integrated and action-oriented approach to ensuring social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has enormous potential. In target 5.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, those factors are explicitly acknowledged as being critical for addressing unpaid care and domestic work, which is disproportionately carried out by women and girls. Gender-responsive policies and actions across all three areas can advance women's income security, facilitate their access to education, training and decent work and raise the productivity of both their paid and unpaid labour, thus contributing to the building of equal and inclusive societies.

13. The outcomes of the consideration by the Commission of its priority theme are expected to be in the form of agreed conclusions, which can catalyse and effectively support the Council and the high-level political forum in the integration of gender perspectives into their deliberations and outcomes. Chair's summaries of ministerial round tables, interactive dialogues and expert panels will also be available. The report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme (E/CN.6/2019/3) can also support the deliberations.

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Results of the seventieth and seventy-first sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note reflects the results, including decisions taken, of the seventieth and seventy-first sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, held in Geneva from 2 to 20 July and from 22 October to 9 November 2018, respectively. Information on the sixty-ninth session, held in Geneva from 19 February to 9 March 2018, can be found in the report of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/73/38, part three).

* E/CN.6/2019/1.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 47/94, the General Assembly recommended that the sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should be scheduled, whenever possible, to allow for the timely transmission of the results of those sessions for information to the Commission on the Status of Women.

2. The Committee held its seventieth and seventy-first sessions from 2 to 20 July and from 22 October to 9 November 2018, respectively. At its seventieth session, the Committee established a working group on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, with a view to elaborating a draft general recommendation on the topic. It adopted a joint statement with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, entitled "Guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health and rights for all women, in particular women with disabilities". It also endorsed the Guidelines against Intimidation or Reprisals (San José Guidelines) (HRI/MC/2015/6), endorsed at the twenty-seventh meeting of chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, held in Costa Rica from 22 to 26 June 2015. The Committee also established the positions of rapporteur and alternate rapporteur on intimidation or reprisals, in accordance with the San José Guidelines. It endorsed a framework of cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to advance the rights of women and girls by combating conflict-related sexual violence and supporting the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security.

3. At its seventy-first session, in accordance with article 18 (1) (b) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its decision 21/I, the Committee decided to transmit a final reminder to the Government of Myanmar to submit an exceptional report on the situation of Rohingya women and girls in northern Rakhine State, failing which the Committee would proceed to consider the situation in the absence of a report. The Committee endorsed a framework of cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. It also decided to hold a side event to the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, aimed at reaffirming the interactive links between the Committee and United Nations entities, under the theme "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations against Women and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The side event is one in the series of events commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Convention. The Committee endorsed the concept note on a draft general recommendation on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration. It decided to hold a general discussion on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, at its seventy-second, in February 2019.

4. At its seventieth session, the Committee heard briefings via videoconference from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Bank Group and the Development Centre of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on recent developments related to indicator 5.1.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity provided a briefing via videoconference. He informed the Committee on the activities carried out under his mandate and his work to protect lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons from gender-based violence and intersecting forms of discrimination. The Committee held an informal consultation with senior officials of the World Health Organization to discuss substantive and policy issues relevant to women's health. On 5 November, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women provided a briefing to the Committee on the

activities carried out under her mandate and her work in addressing violence against women and girls.

5. The Committee continued to engage with partners. Directly following the seventieth session, the Chair of the Committee delivered a statement to the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-second session, in New York. Prior to the seventy-first session of the Committee, on 5 October 2018, the Chair presented the report of the Committee on its sixty-eighth, sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions (A/73/38) to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, in New York.

6. At its seventy-first session, the Committee met with members of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice to discuss strengthened cooperation between both mechanisms. The Committee and the Working Group decided to issue a joint statement on women human rights defenders on the occasion of the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, on 29 November 2018. On 31 October 2018, the Committee held an informal meeting with the Executive Director of UN-Women, to discuss ways and means of strengthening cooperation. The Committee also held an informal discussion with the Human Rights Committee under the auspices of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights to discuss the Human Rights Committee's general comment No. 36 (2018) on the right to life, its decisions with regard to niqab use in France and the Committees' approaches to addressing harmful practices that discriminate against women and girls. On 8 November, the Committee held an informal meeting with States parties to discuss the Committee's engagement with relevant United Nations agencies on gender-related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto, in the context of General Assembly resolution 68/268 on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system. They also discussed the Committee's recently adopted general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education and general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, and the Committee's work to elaborate a general recommendation on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration. In addition, they discussed the financial and human resource challenges that continue to hamper the work of the Committee with respect to individual communications and inquiries. Those challenges notwithstanding, they also discussed some of the achievements made by the Committee, including that, following the issuance of its views in *Angela González Carreño v. Spain* (CEDAW/C/58/D/47/2012), the Supreme Court of Spain issued a judgment in which it held that the views of the Committee were legally binding on the State party.

7. The Committee continued to benefit from country-specific information received from United Nations country teams and entities, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations.

8. As at 9 November 2018, the closing date of the seventy-first session of the Committee, there were 189 States parties to the Convention and 109 States parties to the Optional Protocol. A total of 76 States had accepted the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee. To bring the amendment into force, two thirds of the States parties to the Convention (currently 126 States parties) must deposit their instruments of acceptance with the Secretary-General.

II. Results of the seventieth and seventy-first sessions of the Committee

A. Reports considered by the Committee

9. At its seventieth session, the Committee considered the reports of eight States parties submitted under article 18 of the Convention and issued its concluding observations thereon: Australia (CEDAW/C/AUS/CO/8), Cook Islands (CEDAW/C/COK/CO/2-3), Cyprus (CEDAW/C/CYP/CO/8), Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5), Mexico (CEDAW/C/MEX/CO/9), New Zealand (CEDAW/C/NZL/CO/8), State of Palestine (CEDAW/C/PSE/CO/1) and Turkmenistan (CEDAW/C/TKM/CO/5).

10. At its seventy-first session, the Committee considered the reports of eight States parties and issued its concluding observations thereon: Bahamas (CEDAW/C/BHS/CO/6), Congo (CEDAW/C/COG/CO/7), Lao People's Democratic Republic (CEDAW/C/LAO/CO/8-9), Mauritius (CEDAW/C/MUS/CO/8), Nepal (CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/6), Samoa (CEDAW/C/WSM/CO/6), Tajikistan (CEDAW/C/TJK/CO/6) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (CEDAW/C/MKD/CO/6).

11. Representatives of United Nations country teams and entities, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations attended the sessions. The reports of the States parties, the Committee's lists of issues and questions, the States parties' replies thereto and their introductory statements are posted on the website of the Committee under the relevant session, as are the concluding observations of the Committee.

B. Action taken in relation to the implementation of article 21 of the Convention

Working group on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration

12. The working group met during the seventieth and seventy-first sessions. At the seventieth session, it considered the outcome of the expert group meeting on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, held in Vilnius on 25 and 26 June 2018. At the seventy-first session, the working group finalized the concept note on the draft general recommendation on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, which was endorsed by the Committee.

Working group on working methods

13. The working group met during the sessions. At the seventieth session, it considered and submitted a draft decision on extending the time limit within which States parties may submit their written replies to lists of issues and questions prior to reporting from six months to one year. At the seventy-first session, it presented to the Committee a draft decision to decluster articles 10 through 12 to afford delegations of States parties with the opportunity to respond to questions raised under each of these articles separately during the interactive dialogue.

Working group on cooperation with national human rights institutions

14. The working group met during the sessions. At the seventieth session, it discussed the purpose and objectives of its work and adopted its terms of reference. At the seventy-first session, the working group heard a briefing by a representative

of the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions on its thirteenth conference, held from 10 to 12 October 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco.

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/UN-Women/Sustainable Development Goals working group

15. The working group met during the sessions. At the seventieth session, it was provided with a briefing on the revised treaty-specific reporting guidelines on the form and content of initial and periodic reports, taking into account the gender-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Sustainable Development Goal target 5.1 and indicator 5.1.1. At the seventy-first session, the working group met to finalize the revised draft of the reporting guidelines to be submitted to the Committee. The revised reporting guidelines are aimed at providing guidance to States parties by linking the implementation of the Goals with States parties' obligations under the Convention. On 6 November, the Committee adopted the revised reporting guidelines, which will be shortened before transmission to States parties.

Working group on the Inter-Parliamentary Union

16. The working group met during the sessions and discussed the possibility of adopting a joint declaration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union on parity in politics, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Convention, with a view to increasing the representation of women in political processes for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal target 5.5, to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Working group on sexual and reproductive health and rights

17. The working group met during the seventieth session. It finalized a draft joint statement by the Committee and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, entitled "Guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health and rights for all women, in particular women with disabilities".

Task force on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations

18. The task force met during the sessions and discussed preparations regarding a panel discussion on women and peace and security to be held during the seventy-second session of the Committee, in February 2019. It examined the Committee's references to women and peace and security in its concluding observations and lists of issues and questions.

C. Action taken in relation to ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

Enhancing the Committee's working methods under article 18 of the Convention

19. At its seventieth session, the Committee decided that the time limit for States parties to submit their written replies to lists of issues and questions prior to reporting, under the simplified reporting procedure, would be extended from six months to one year. It amended its decision 62/II and decided to replace the standard paragraph on the 2030 Agenda in its concluding observations with the following new standard paragraph on the Sustainable Development Goals, to be placed as a new section C before the section entitled "Parliament", which becomes section D: "The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls

for the realization of de jure and de facto (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee recalls the importance of goal 5 and the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It urges the State party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of their country and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect."

20. At its seventy-first session, the Committee decided that, at future sessions, questions relating to articles 10 through 12 would be posed separately during the interactive dialogue and that delegations of States parties would be given time to respond to the questions under each of the articles separately. It also amended its decisions 62/II and 70/V and further revised the standard paragraph on the 2030 Agenda, as follows: "The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for the realization of de jure (legal) and de facto (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recalls the importance of Goal 5 and of the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Goals. It urges the State party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of the State party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect."

Follow-up procedure

21. The Committee continued its work under the follow-up procedure at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions, adopting the reports of the Rapporteur on follow-up to concluding observations and considering the follow-up reports of Azerbaijan, Czechia, Eritrea, France, Gabon, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Vanuatu. At its seventieth session, the Committee decided to discontinue the preparation of summaries and the inclusion of follow-up information received from State parties and other sources in its follow-up letters to States parties. At its seventy-first session, the Committee decided to change its follow-up letters to States parties to include expression of its regret of the delay in receipt of the information requested by the Committee in its concluding observations, if it is 12 months or more overdue.

Overdue reports

22. The Committee decided that its secretariat should systematically remind States parties whose reports were five years or more overdue to submit their reports as soon as possible. As at 9 November 2018, the closing date of the seventy-first session, there were nine States parties whose reports were overdue by five years or more: Dominica, Kiribati, Latvia, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe and Yemen. With regard to long-overdue reports, the Committee decided that, as a last resort, and failing receipt of the long-overdue reports by a specified date, it would proceed with the consideration of the implementation of the Convention in the State party in the absence of a report. States parties have been responsive to the reminders transmitted by the secretariat, as evidenced by the number of reports submitted and scheduled for consideration. The Committee currently has 24 reports scheduled for consideration between the seventy-second session (February/March 2019) and the seventy-fourth session (October/November 2019).

Dates of future sessions of the Committee

23. The Committee confirmed the tentative dates of its seventy-second, seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions as follows:

Seventy-second session, Geneva

(a) Forty-third session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: 12 to 15 February 2019;

(b) Twelfth session of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol: 14 and 15 February 2019;

(c) Plenary: 18 February to 8 March 2019;

(d) Pre-sessional working group for the seventy-fourth session: 11 to 15 March 2019;

Seventy-third session, Geneva

(a) Forty-fourth session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: 26 to 28 June 2019;

(b) Thirteenth session of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol: 27 and 28 June 2019;

(c) Plenary: 1 to 19 July 2019;

(d) Pre-sessional working group for the seventy-fifth session: 22 to 26 July 2019;

Seventy-fourth session, Geneva

(a) Forty-fifth session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: 16 to 18 October 2019;

(b) Fourteenth session of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol: 17 and 18 October 2019;

(c) Plenary: 21 October to 8 November 2019;

(d) Pre-sessional working group for the seventy-six session: 11 to 15 November 2019.

Reports to be considered at future sessions of the Committee

24. The Committee confirmed that it would consider the reports of Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Botswana, Colombia, Ethiopia, Myanmar (exceptional report), Serbia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at its seventy-second session, the reports of Austria, Bahrain, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guyana, Mozambique and Qatar at its seventy-third session and the reports of Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Pakistan and Seychelles at its seventy-fourth session.

D. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising from article 2 and article 8 of the Optional Protocol

25. At its seventieth session, the Committee endorsed the report of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol on its forty-first session. The Committee adopted decisions of inadmissibility with regard to communications concerning Denmark (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/70/D/76/2014) and Turkey

(child custody dispute) (CEDAW/C/70/D/92/2015). It found one communication concerning Denmark (non-refoulement) admissible. The Committee discontinued its consideration of one communication concerning Denmark (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/70/D/113/2017) and one concerning Switzerland (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/70/D/115/2017). On 9 November 2018, the Committee amended rule 64 (2) of its rules of procedure to delete the word "all" and replace it with the words "a majority of", such that the amended rule now reads as follows: "A working group may also declare that a communication is admissible under the Optional Protocol, provided that a majority of members eligible to participate so decide".

26. With regard to inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee endorsed the report of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol on its tenth session.

27. At its seventy-first session, the Committee endorsed the report of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol on its forty-second session. The Committee adopted decisions of inadmissibility with regard to two communications concerning Denmark (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/71/D/81/2015 and CEDAW/C/71/D/101/2016). It discontinued its consideration of three communications, one concerning Denmark (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/71/D/73/2014), one concerning Ecuador (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/71/D/83/2015) and one concerning Austria (non-refoulement) (CEDAW/C/71/D/112/2017).

28. With regard to inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee endorsed the report of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol on its eleventh session.